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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2982
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 5184
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY 0071
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY 0624
RUEHDJ/AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI PRIORITY 0001
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 1015
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 9185
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY 0185
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 0720
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 1634
RUEHYN/AMEMBASSY SANAA PRIORITY 0007
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 5291
RHMFISS/COMUSFK SEOUL KOR PRIORITY
RUACAAA/COMUSKOREA INTEL SEOUL KOR PRIORITY
RHMFISS/COMUSKOREA J5 SEOUL KOR PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC//OSD/ISA/EAP// PRIORITY
RUEHUL/USDAO SEOUL KOR PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0593

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 000104

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/21/2019
TAGS: [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [PHSA](#) [KS](#)
SUBJECT: ROK TO SEND DESTROYER TO THE GULF OF ADEN

REF: SEOUL 39

Classified By: Joseph Yun for reasons 1.4 (b/d).

11. (C) Kim Yong-hyon, the Director of the U.S. Security Cooperation Division within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT) told poloffs on January 16 that the ROKG decided to send a 4,500 ton class destroyer equipped with a Lynx helicopter and rigid inflatable craft to the Gulf of Aden to participate in the security operations of the combined maritime forces. The destroyer can carry up to 310 personnel. The vessel's primary missions are to cooperate with the combined maritime forces on counter-piracy and selectively participate in any incidental counter-narcotics activities, and to provide escort support to ROK commercial vessels deemed to be in danger.

12. (C) As Kim predicted, the cabinet reported the decision on January 20 to President Lee Myung-bak, who approved the plan. (Note: The media reported on the decision the same day. End note.) Kim said that the ROKG will send the plan within a week to the National Assembly whose ratification is obligatory before the ROKG can deploy military assets overseas. Kim also said that MOFAT and the Ministry of National Defense (MND) hoped to send a survey team to Bahrain and Djibouti for consultations with the Fifth Fleet Command by the end of January (date to be determined). The ROKG will provide more detailed information during the upcoming Security Policy Initiative (SPI) talks in Seoul. After obtaining the National Assembly's approval, the ship could depart Korea at the end of February or early March.

13. (U) Even though MND would deploy the vessel, the Bureau of Overseas Koreans and Consular Affairs within MOFAT has the policy lead on the deployment and counter-piracy cooperation. (See reftel.)
STEPHENS